



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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## ACTION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### HOUSE BEGINS IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

Speaker Madigan introduced House Resolution 1650, co-sponsored by all House members, to create a Special Investigative Committee of 21 members, to investigate allegations of misconduct against Governor Blagojevich and make recommendations as to whether a cause for impeachment exists. The resolution passed the House 113-0. The Special Committee will consist of the following 12 House Democrat members and nine House Republican members:

#### DEMOCRATS

Chairwoman -	Julie Hamos
Barbara Flynn Currie	Gary Hannig
Edward Acevedo	Connie Howard
Monique Davis	Lou Lang
Mary Flowers	Frank Mautino
Jack Franks	Art Turner
John Fritchey	

#### REPUBLICANS

Spokesperson -	Mike Bost
Jim Durkin	Roger Eddy
Suzanne Bassi	Chapin Rose
Patricia Bellock	Jim Sacia
William Black	Jil Tracy

This committee began meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 10 am, and is tentatively scheduled to continue meeting everyday except Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day, until its work is completed. The House Special Investigative Committee proceedings may be viewed online at:

<http://www.ilga.gov/house/committees/reports.asp?CommitteeID=758&GA=95>

In response to the impeachment resolution passed by the House, the Senate passed SR 966 by a vote of 56-0. SR 966 creates a special committee in the Senate consisting of nine members, five Democrats and four Republicans, to recommend rules for the Senate in the event that the House votes to impeach the Governor. The nine members appointed are:

#### DEMOCRATS

James Clayborne	Don Harmon
John Cullerton	Ira Silverstein
William Haine	

#### REPUBLICANS

Dale Righter	Matt Murphy
Dan Rutherford	Kirk Dillard

Last Friday, Attorney General Lisa Madigan, pursuant to Article V, Section 6(d) of the Illinois Constitution and Rule 382 of the Illinois Supreme Court, officially filed a motion before the Illinois Supreme Court for the removal of the Governor, questioning his ability to effectively serve the people of Illinois. This is the first time in the State's history that such a motion has been made to the Supreme Court. There is no deadline in place for the court to return a decision.

### Governor Signs Rail Oversight Bill

The Governor signed SB 620 this week which would provide for oversight for rail police in Illinois. SB 620 was initiated by the United Transportation Union to insure the conduct of privately employed rail police officers is monitored by the Illinois State Police.





## NATIONAL NEWS

### Union Women Earn More, Have Better Benefits

The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) in Washington D.C. just released findings that show working women with union contracts earn more and are more likely to have health care and paid pension benefits than women not in unions under similar circumstances.

The report, titled *Unions and Upward Mobility for Women Workers*, also shows that currently women represent 45 percent of union members across the country and if that trend continues, women will be the majority of the unionized workforce by 2020.

The findings show that from 2004-2007, union women earned about \$18.77 per hour, compared to \$13.30 per hour for non-union women workers. Over 75 percent of unionized women have health insurance compared to 50.9 percent of non-union women. And 75.8 percent of union women have pension benefits compared to just 43 percent of women workers not in unions.

The data in the CEPR report supports the argument for passing the Employee Free Choice Act in 2009. Obviously when working women organize and bargain for decent wages and benefits it improves their quality of life and the lives of their children.

### Illinois Union Members Electors Cast Votes for Obama

Four union members who were chosen to serve on the 2008 Illinois Electoral College were in Springfield on Dec. 15, 2008, to officially cast their votes for President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden.

The ceremony took place in the Illinois Senate Chamber, on December 15, with all 21 electors casting their votes for Obama and Biden. The Acting

Chairperson was Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White (IFT) and the Elected Chairperson was Illinois Representative Constance Howard.

The union member electors were Molly McKenzie, IFT; Mark Guethle, IUPAT; Nancy Shepherdson, Newspaper Guild/CWA; and Rep. Tom Holbrook, UFCW, who was chosen to replace Sen. Debbie Halvorson as the elector for the 11<sup>th</sup> District.

## STATE NEWS

### SHORT TERM BORROWING TO PAY BACK LOG OF BILLS

State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Comptroller Dan Hynes joined the Governor's office in announcing that Illinois will proceed with the \$1.4 billion bond offering to pay down the \$4.5 billion of unpaid bills. Attorney General Madigan raised concerns about certifying the debt due to the Governor's legal and political problems. An agreement was made to insert language into the bond contract, citing the House impeachment process underway and the Attorney General petition before the Supreme Court. The language was found acceptable by bond attorneys. The bonds will be offered today and the proceeds will most likely be available within seven days.

*Enjoy a Wonderful Holiday Season  
from the Officers & Staff of the  
Illinois AFL-CIO*